

# STATEMENT FOR THE FDA HEARING ON THE NEUROLOGICAL EFFECTS OF MERCURY AMALGAM FILLINGS

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My name is Carol Ward. I am Vice President of DAMS, Dental Amalgam Mercury Syndrome. I have a B.S. & Master's in Library science and prior to my retirement 2 years ago, I was a reference librarian and library branch supervisor at the Free Library of Philadelphia. I also have nearly 20 years of experience behind me as coordinator and officer of DAMS. I have heard many scientific lectures on mercury and dental fillings and have spoken to countless individuals who have partially or fully recovered their health from having their amalgam fillings replaced.

I am a survivor of mercury toxicity from my 16 mercury-amalgam fillings. At the age of 45, I became catastrophically ill. For months no medical doctor could arrive at a diagnosis, yet I was too weak to walk, too weak to sit up in a chair. Over a period of months, I became an invalid, whereas prior to my breakdown, I had been a jogger and a long-distance hiker. A biochemist-nutritionist finally was able to diagnose my condition. He said that I was ill from the my dental amalgam fillings and that my immune system had been virtually destroyed.

Several medical doctors assessed me and found no organic damage. However, after other possible causes were ruled out, my symptoms fit well with the picture of amalgam toxicity from my so-called silver dental fillings. Hereafter I will refer to these fillings as mercury fillings because of their 50% mercury content. I was 7 years old when the first one was placed and 43 yrs when the last 2 were placed. The

nutritionist said I had systemic yeast and would have to be on a special diet. A live blood cell test showed him to be correct in his assessment. I had yeast crystals in each blood cell. I will never be able to eat certain foods that most people enjoy, nor to have any alcoholic beverages.

My symptoms included depression, equilibrium problems, repeated infections, dizziness, urinary and kidney infections, digestive disorders, memory loss, low thyroid, and visual field problems. My life was limited to one floor of my home. I was unable to work, to drive, or to do anything but survive hour by hour.

Following the systematic replacement of my mercury fillings by composites by a mercury-free dentist, I began to recover. But I still was unable to stand at an intersection, ballroom dance, or play the piano the way I used to, or get proper rest at night. The treatment that made a difference was BAL., British Anti-Lewisite. BAL is in the Physician's Desk Reference. As I understand it, it was a precursor to DMPS. It was used in World War II to chelate mercury from the older British miners when they needed detoxing from their exposure to mercury while going down in the mines. Every morning for 20 days, I had a BAL injection. . When the bandage was removed from the injection site each day it was black.

After those 20 days, I experienced a great improvement in equilibrium, intellectual functioning, dancing, playing the piano, and sleeping. Since that time I would say I have achieved about an 80% recovery.

What I lived through from my mercury amalgam fillings was hellish beyond description! I ask any of you who are listening whether you would have wanted this for yourself or your children. It is time to expose the real nature of these fillings

we call 'silver dental fillings' as unstable toxic compounds with the component of 50% mercury. No one is safe from a potentially negative reaction to these fillings, especially if they are genetically prone to problems excreting mercury. It has been found that a percentage of the public, 1-20% are unable to excrete mercury efficiently.

Speaking of genetics, it is significant that Congresswoman Diane Watson has re-introduced the bill this year, H.R. 4011 which would phase out dental amalgam fillings and immediately ban their use in pregnant women and children 18 and under. DAMS strongly supports the ban on mercury fillings. Our views are echoed by many countries which have issued warnings concerning these vulnerable populations. If mercury fillings were safe, legislation like this would not be necessary..

#### CHILDREN'S AMALGAM STUDIES HAVE MANY FLAWS

I would like to take some time to discuss DAMS' view of the flaws in the Children's Amalgam Studies. In particular, during the American children's study, despite their reported neurological illnesses many children were kept in the study, for example, 36 children with sensory disorders, 24 had psychological disorders, 19 had asthma, and 4 had neurological disorders. DAMS is asking why these children were not pulled out of the study to protect them from a known toxin when their health was already compromised?

Other weaknesses in the studies are that the researchers DeRouen and Bellinger focussed on statistical averaging so that damage that individual children were having may have been missed. The American children's amalgam study was based on

children who were not representative of the general population as the children most susceptible to mercury injury from vaccines would have been already screened out from the study.

A further question must be asked about kidney damage to the children with amalgams. If there was a lower level of mercury in the urine following the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the study, this tends to indicate that the children's kidneys were becoming less efficient at eliminating mercury and more of it was staying in their bodies.

Our conclusion regarding the children's studies, based on the vast body of scientific research, is that mercury amalgam fillings are inherently damaging and children were unwittingly exposed to this damage. Many of the effects may not show up until mid-life when they may appear as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, MS, ALS, Parkinson's, and other chronic diseases.

I believe it is the responsibility of the FDA to safeguard public health by properly classifying amalgam fillings. It should not wait for Congress but should act to ban amalgam now.

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